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305 ALBANY PLACE, SAN ANTONIO, TX.

WACO--THE GEYSER CITY.

PROGRESS AND PROSPERITY

the City of Waco,
Dating from the
Incorporation

THE PRESENT.

History of the City's
Growth

Geographical Sketch of a
Pleasant City, Who Has
Furnished Many Enter-
prises--The Public
Schools and Their
History.

Waco is a city of 25,000 inhab-
itants, a quiet town, a quiet
place, the home of the Waco
people. Waco was a friendly
town when George B. Erath, Stan-
ley, Neil McLean and others
at present owned a band of
men from the Miami settlement they
settled on the west side of the Brazos
river, and established a station for
their cattle on the bank
of the river. Several of the party
decided that they would start
a settlement on the site of the
little Indian town, and when those
settlers determined upon a
site that nothing would deter them
from their purpose. A number of
men joined with others, and the
site for the Central City was

located. The town of Waco was incor-
porated in 1856. George B. Erath being
the first merchant was
the first to occupy the lot num-
bered as the southeast corner of
the block streets. Captain S. P.
Harris, of ex-Governor L. S. Ross,
and his family lived on the same block upon
the lot. The land was part of
the Erath tract, and belonged to N.
Harris Butler and J. De C. Harris.
The gentlemen devoted to the
city and were contributing the pub-
lic, for instance, also a narrow
strip of the river bank, on the
city. A block of ground was also
given by them to the town corpora-
tion for school purposes, and is now oc-
cupied by the old Methodist Female col-
lege.

Waco established a ferry across
the Brazos river, which attracted great
business. The first of bringing the
city into the country was
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until the important fact was dis-
covered that McLennan county was
about the center of a district that was
better adapted to cotton raising than
any other in the South. North
and West the cotton suffers from cold
and dry weather, and South and East
the army worms destroy a large part
of the crop each year. Cotton rais-
ers within a radius of fifty miles
from Waco are particularly exempt from
either of these evils, and this fact ex-
plains in great measure for the well-
earned reputation of Waco as the
largest interior market.

The city of Waco, Texas, de-
velopes 19 miles and has a popu-
lation of about 25,000. It is the
largest city in the South, and is the
center of the cotton trade. The city
is one of the most beautiful in the
South. It is situated on a high bluff
on the west bank of the river, the stream
is gradual to the crest of the hill to
the west. North of the public plaza
there is a chain of wooded hills that
extend to the Brazos and were along
that stream a distance of miles or
thirty miles. The timber is principally
live oak and cedar. West of the city
and south of the Brazos hills lies the
prettiest and the richest black land
country the eye ever beheld. A snow-
drift of hills and valleys with every foot
of it susceptible of profitable cultivation,
with smiling springs flowing from every
valley, land that when well cultivated
produces well, and no rain. It is a
veritable paradise for the farmer.

The operation of the ferry established
by Capt. Ross continued until 1870,
when the handsome suspension bridge
which now spans the Brazos was com-
pleted. This magnificent structure is
475 feet long and two years were con-
sumed in its construction. The material
was transported on wagons from Bos-
ton, Waco not having railroad facil-
ities at that time. In 1872 the Waco
and Northwestern railroad was com-
pleted from Brownsville to Waco, and
it was then that the Central City began to
boom, and in the space the word "boom"
is now used, but the city attracted more
than ordinary attention, and improve-
ments began to appear that substantial
character, peculiar to none but solid
business towns. The Waco and North-
western was extended up to Ross, ten
miles north from Waco, and from there
the line was built by another company
to Albany and is now owned and oper-
ated by the Texas Central railroad, with
Charles Hamilton general manager,
headquarters in Waco. No more rail-
roads were built at Waco until 1881,
when the Missouri, Kansas and Texas
came in a rush. Soon after that the
Cotton Belt linked Waco with St.
Louis via Tyler, and on the west enabled
Wacoans to enjoy diurnal visits to
Oatexville. Eight years later the San
Antonio and Arkansas Pass greeted the
sister route from the south, and this
completes the list of railroads connecting
Waco with the outside world.

Waco has quite a number of manu-
facturing establishments, some of them
ranking with the best in the South. Most
of these have been located in the city
since the advent of railroads, but one at
least was planted here while the Central
City was yet in village garb. Allusion is
made to the Waco cotton mills. The es-
tablishment of this enterprise was under-
taken in 1860. It was not in operation
in 1863. The company was organized in
Waco under the name of "The Waco
Manufacturing company," with five stock-
holders, all of whom were directors.
These five gentlemen were J. B. Erath,
George E. Boney, J. Thompson, H. M.
Ford and Joe Giles. These gentlemen
believed that Waco would soon become
the greatest interior cotton market in
the South, and they did not see why the
manufacture of the raw material right
at the gateway of the river should
not be made profitable. Having deter-
mined to try the experiment, Mr. Thomp-
son was dispatched to England for the
necessary machinery. The most serious
difficulties attended the prosecution of the
company's plans. Soon after Mr. Thomp-
son's arrival in England the civil war be-
tween the states began, and the Ameri-
can ports were all blockaded. Nothing
daunted, however, Mr. Thompson pur-
chased the machinery in Manchester,
England, and shipped it in wagons from
Birmingham to Waco. Mr. Thompson
dram the rounds with the machinery and
was accompanied by Mr. James Dagley,
who was a first-class mechanic, and
whose services were required to set up
and operate the machinery. They were
en route six months, nearly two of them

being required to make the trip from
Brownsville to Waco. When first put
in operation there was no effort to manu-
facture cloth, but tons of cotton yarn and
rope were made. Looms were added
later and the coarse grades of domestics
were turned out in abundance. Such is
a brief history of the starting of the first
manufacturing enterprise in Waco. The
difficulties attending the transportation
of the machinery entailed an enormous
expense upon the company, and added
to this was the difficulty in procuring
labor sufficiently skilled to operate the
mill. Notwithstanding all these troubles,
the company was successful for a time,
and at the close of the war had built up
a pretty fair trade. It is a well-known
fact that during the war nearly all the
clothing worn by the Southern people was
made at home. The noble women of
this country, with their husbands fight-
ing the battles of the war, were busy
battling with necessity. They spun and
wove with their own hands and children
were clothed and then they spun and wove
for their defenders on the battlefield. The
sewing was much the hardest, and when
the Waco Manufacturing company began
spinning yarn by the ton it found ready
sale among the homes of the Southern
soldiers. At the close of the war, how-
ever, the finished products of the North-
ern mills soon destroyed the market for
the yarn, and it became necessary to put
it in looms.

An interesting fact in connection with
this machinery is, that one of the
"mules" is now in the mill, is the identi-
cal "mule" which was on exhibition in

city secretary, city attorney, tax assessor
and collector, treasurer and marshal. The
city engineer, street commissioner, sani-
tary inspector, city health officers, public
weigher, city hall janitor and all the po-
lice are appointed by the mayor, sub-
ject to confirmation by the council. The
mayor is required to sit as judge of the
police court and holds this court every
morning, except Sunday. The present
officers, elected, are Mayor, C. C. Mc-
Callister, city secretary, W. C. Cooper,
tax assessor and collector, S. B. Ham-
phreys, treasurer, W. W. Sibley, city at-
torney, James A. Harrison, marshal, A. F.
C. Neill, Aldermen--First ward, T. C.
Tibbs, W. A. Faye, Second ward, J. E.
D. Lacy, A. B. Byness, Third ward, J. E.
Reinhardt, Leo Slaughter, Fourth ward,
Dr. J. C. King, S. R. Walters, Fifth
ward, John F. Herbert, W. H. Deaton.
Our aldermen are elected in each ward
every year for a term of two years. All
officials' terms are for the period of two
years. The salaries allowed the present of-
ficers are as follows: Mayor, \$1500 a
year, up to the end of this term, which
is next April, when by a recent act of
the city council, the mayor will draw
\$2500 a year. The city secretary is
allowed \$1200 a year; city attorney,
\$1800 a year; engineer, \$1800; assessor and col-
lector, \$1200; treasurer, \$1200; marshal,
\$1200; street commissioner, \$1200; health
physician, \$400; sanitary inspector, \$280;
public weigher, \$200; janitor, \$180;
inspected policeman, \$900.

COL. R. B. PARROTT.
The city of Waco today is turning
itself forward as the rival in every re-



COL. R. B. PARROTT.

London at the great exposition in 1862.
The whole of the machinery purchased
by Mr. Thompson was manufactured by
Walker & Hocking of Birmingham, and
the firm had some of their products
on exhibition at the London fair. The
mule in question was a part of their ex-
hibit.

The Waco city mills were the next
important enterprise undertaken after
the completion of the cotton mill. It
was built by Alex. McGowan of Houston
on the west bank of the river and is now
the property of Mr. Clarence M. Hubber.
It is equipped with the latest improved
roller machinery for making flour. The
suspension bridge followed in 1870 and
close upon its heels came the Waco and
Northwestern railroad from Brownsville.
Waco then began to discard her village
clothes and don the habiliments of a city.

The McCallister hotel, four stories high,
was reared on the corner of Fourth
and Austin streets, two blocks and
the length of the public plaza from the
site occupied by Mr. Harward mentioned
near the beginning of this article. It
marked the center of the business part
of the city, but residences, and handsome
ones, too, shot up the scale in every
direction. Capt. Ross had retired to the
banks of Waco creek and opened a farm
between his house and town. The city
began to flourish and the citizens were
forced to turn, for the first time, to the
other side of his house as to speak. The
first farm was laid off as Ross' addition,
and is now almost solidly built upon.
The second farm is now divided with
streets and alleys, dotted with cottages
while the stately old mansion that shel-
tered the noted pioneer still stands bul-
ding defiance to time and insects. For
years of the family have occupied it since
Capt. Ross' death.

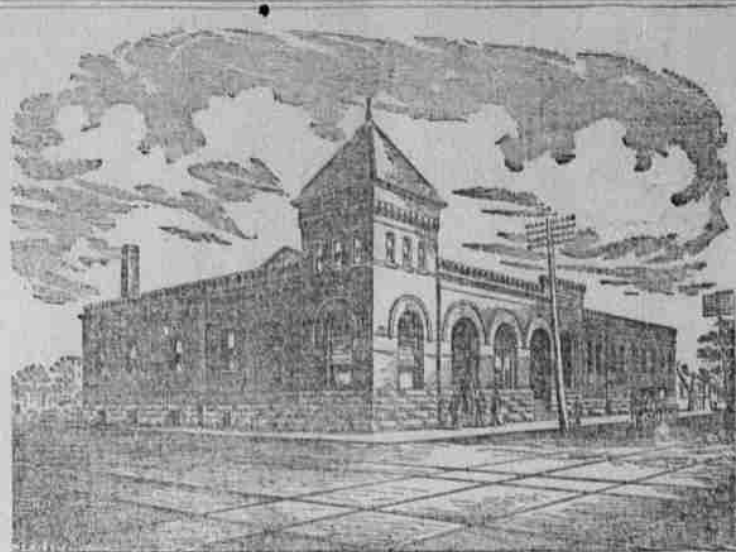
It would be impossible to mention all
the enterprises added to the list in Waco
after the erection of the suspension
bridge and the building of the Waco and
Northwestern. The cotton seed oil mills
in 1866, the Rogers-Kirby woolen mills
in 1868, and in 1888 Capt. J. D. Bell
erected the famous cottonseed oil mill water
and initiated the present system of water
supply, which for quality and quantity
cannot be excelled. This has been the
greatest card for Waco. People come
from everywhere to see the great cascade
flowing over the millrace of galleons
of pure crystal water to drink and to
bathe in, and to admire the simple
arrangements of the thermal fluid as it pours
forth from a depth of more than 1800
feet.

The city government of Waco consists
of a mayor and board of ten aldermen,

spect of all the leading cities of the
state, and by many ways enjoys advan-
tages and resources possessed nowhere
else in the South. Much of her pros-
perity and greatness is due to the
enterprising and progressive citizenship
she possesses. Foremost among these is
when Waco owes much to Col. R. B.
Parrott. His liberality and enterprise,
public spiritedness and genius are im-
pressed in various ways indelibly upon
the city and he has done much for Texas
at large. No great matter has found him
wanting in advocacy and support, both
morally and financially.

Col. Parrott is a native of Virginia,
having been born in Loudoun county, Oc-
tober 10, 1848. He entered the Univer-
sity of Virginia, being the youngest stu-
dent that ever matriculated at that in-
stitution, having entered before he was
14 years of age, but when war was de-
clared he took French leave of the col-
lege and enlisted under Col. Mosley, rais-
ing his fortunes with the last campaign.
He served through the war as a commis-
sioned officer. He was captured and taken
to Boston Harbor December 24,
1864, where he was kept in confinement
until June 10, 1865, being released with
Alexander H. Stephens. After the sur-
render he returned to Virginia and re-
sided with a large cousin's house at
Richmond "two things," being the young-
est man there in that capacity. He
moved to Texas in 1872, and selected
Waco as his home. He embarked in the
insurance business and has continued in
that as general manager for various com-
panies, at present being general manager
for Texas, the Pacific and Arkansas,
for the Provident Savings Life As-
surance company of New York.

About fifteen years ago Col. Parrott
was a member of the city council, re-
maining in that body for two terms,
where he earned a reputation for pro-
gressiveness and far-sightedness and at
the same time built several monuments
to the north of his services to the city.
He began the advocacy of public im-
provements which had not been attempt-
ed before and vigorously supported his
ideas. As chairman of the school com-
mittee, he was unwearied in efforts to
give Waco the prominence she now oc-
cupies in educational matters. It was al-
together through the instrumentality of
Col. Parrott that the large, handsome
brick schools of the First, Second and
Third wards were built. Col. Parrott,
as chairman of the school committee, se-
lected the sites and was chiefly instru-
mental in securing the construction of
the large buildings, buildings which were



Waco Natatorium-Sanatorium, one block south of the Postoffice.

said at that time to be wholly beyond
the needs of the city for twenty-five or
thirty years to come. His judgment was
vindicated in the course of a few years.
These large schools are even now crowded

in the city has been without his warmest
support and encouragement. No other
man has contributed so liberally to every
movement and undertaking of such a
character, in all public enterprises and
benevolent objects. In all his actions
Col. Parrott has been actuated by patri-
otic and noble motives. He is a man
of the very most executive ability, and
his active brain is ever at work. His
sympathies in the way of public enter-
prises and improvements have many
times appeared, as it were, the more
abundant and to use a common ex-
pression, the more barked, but he has not
in advance an insupportable or visionary
idea. It has frequently been said of
Col. Parrott that he ought to be in New
York or Chicago, where he could com-
mand, as it is admitted he could, the
necessary financial support for many of
the important projects and undertakings
to which he has called attention. Every
citizen of Waco has heard the expression,
"Waco ought to have about five or six
of Col. Parrott. What a city
she would be if she had!" Too much
cannot be said of his progressiveness,
and when combined with this quality is
that of intense practicality, it is easy
to understand the value of such citizen-
ship. Col. Parrott has been a success in
all his undertakings. Failure with him
has not been known in any instance
where ability, genius and indomitable will
could have possibly achieved success. His
position in the Provident Life Assurance
company is an enviable one, and it is
doubtful if there is another man in the
South holding a position of similar im-
portance in that business. His success
in that field is widely known and is most
highly appreciated by the company. His
offices occupy a large portion of one of
the floors of the magnificent building which
he caused to be erected in this city by
that company at a cost of \$200,000. His
agents are scattered over Texas and
many other states and territories. He
points with the greatest satisfaction to
the fact that his company is the only
one having a building in the state.

Col. Parrott was foremost in the im-
provement for the representation of Texas
at the World's fair. He advocated an ap-
propriation and have the raising of \$300,
000 for the purpose of a building and
proper representation of all the great re-
sources of the state. He was a director
of the Texas World's Fair Exhibit asso-

ciation, both under the presidency of
Col. Harter and later under Mr. H. B.
Andrews of Fort Worth. He was in-
volved and times in his efforts to pro-
mote the interests of the association, and of
the state and contributed more largely
to the funds which were used in provid-
ing representation, was than any
other citizen in Texas. Col. Parrott be-
lieves that Texas is the greatest state in
the union in the way of resources and
that all that is lacking to place her in
the lead of all her sister states in every
respect is the development of these ad-
vantages and resources. He carries this
belief out logically by advocating any and
all measures and enterprises which are
calculated to do this and shows his
faith in his opinions and beliefs by aiding
financially every effort of the kind sub-
mitted to him. He is now engaged in
an effort to provide another "Texas on
Wheels" greater, more attractive and com-
prehensive by far than its predecessor,
for the purpose of advertising the re-
sources of the state. The original "Texas
on Wheels" was his idea and he contrib-
uted liberally to it. He is nothing, if
not broad in his views and while he is
a firm believer in the superior advantages
of Waco, the city of his home, he is not
affected or overmastered by localism in
any sense of the term. A Texan, he be-
lieves in Texas and is always at the
front in an undertaking for the develop-
ment of the state and its progress. It is
now a settled fact, undoubtedly, that
Waco will build and open a grand cotton
palace next October. It was Col. Par-
rott who moved at a meeting of the
Waco Commercial Club last December
that the cotton palace be built. The na-
tion was not by stillness and quiet on
the part of the club, the great undertak-
ing seeming to be looked upon almost
as impossible, but the motion prevailed,
and today every citizen of Waco is talk-
ing of the cotton palace and fully half
the money necessary to build it has been
subscribed with the certainty that the
business will be shortly forthcoming. It
is now an indisputable fact that Waco
possesses resources and advantages in
her lot of which water to be found no-
where else in the country, and here it is
again that Col. Parrott plays a leading
part in the work of bringing the city for-
ward. He first conceived the idea of
developing the water for medicinal pur-
poses and became an outspoken advo-



Provident Savings Life Assurance Co's Building.